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WEDNESDAY
DECEMBER 23, 1953

Bill Benton and his wife came to lunch with us today. He anticipates that McCarthy will probably drop the suit against Benton.

We had a calm day at the office. I went shopping this afternoon for Christmas presents. I was seduced into picking up a couple of antiques as a side issue, including an iron bedstead painted to resemble bamboo.

E. went to Versailles tonight for the 13th round in the Presidential battle. It wound up in the election of Monsieur René Coty, a Senator, 71 years old, from Le Havre. Although he has been in politics for many years he is not widely known but is said to be an able man. Amongst the hobbies listed in the newspapers which he does not favor is shooting. This will be quite a blow to the guards at Rambouillet, who rejoiced in the enthusiasm of President Auriol for this sport. This ending of what some of the journals have called the "dialogue de sourds" - the dialogue of the deaf - brings to a close what most Frenchmen consider a sorry proceeding. It has demonstrated once again the seemingly unbridgable gulf between the Right and the Left in French politics. After the results were announced the Marseillaise was played and E. said the Communists all remained seated. No one rebuked them for this.

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